September 21, 2010

Public Notice for Water Quality Certification and/or Waste Discharge Requirements (Dredge/Fill Projects)

Riverside Park-Phase I, City of Ukiah
WDID No. 1B10086WNME

Mendocino County

On July 28, 2010, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from Katie Merz , Community Services Supervisor, City of Ukiah (applicant), requesting Federal Clean Water Act, section 401, water quality certification for proposed activities associated with the Riverside Park-Phase I (project). The proposed project will cause disturbances to waters of the United States and waters of the State associated with the Russian River in the Russian River Hydrologic Unit No. 114.00.

The proposed project is located at the eastern end of Gobbi Street, on the western (right) bank of the Russian River, and is bounded to the north, west, and south by agricultural land. A portion of the project area was the site of the City of Ukiah's former wastewater treatment plant that was decommissioned in 1958. A large pit in the central portion of the property was used to mine gravel from approximately 1981 until 1986. Since 1986, the pit area has been filled in with asphalt and concrete debris. The proposed project includes removing the "debris field" and restoration of this area.

The primary purpose of the proposed project is to restore 22.4 acres of a 42 acre City-owned parcel and implement the overall concepts outlined in the *Gobbi Street Riverfront Park Refined Concept Plan Project Statement*. The entire project will consist of two phases and is expected to take 3 years to complete. Project elements include: controlled public access trails with picnic areas, an entry road and parking area, riparian forest and riverine habitat restoration, meadow revegetation, wetland restoration associated with two ponds, and three access points to the river. The larger pond in the center of the park will act as a buffer between the active elements of the park and the passive elements of the restoration efforts.

Proposed restoration of the gravel pit will involve removing the existing "debris field" of approximately 2,000 cubic yards of asphalt and concrete debris dumped in piles over 76,000 square feet of upland area. An additional 210 cubic yards of debris will be removed from the top of bank area. The debris removal area will be regraded and shallow depressions will be created to support native sedges and wet meadow grasses. Native soil that was previously removed for trail construction will be used to recreate a low broad berm at the same height as the existing top of bank. The site will be seeded with native grasses and wildflowers and planted with native trees and shrubs. The excavated debris material will to be stored onsite to be recycled and used for future parking area base material.

Three trails will be constructed to allow public access to the water's edge. The kayak/canoe access trail will be 5-feet wide and 160-feet long. On the lower portion of

the bank, the trail will be stabilized with 330 square feet of 2-4 ton boulder riprap fill cabled together. In addition to the central access, two foot trails will be added in the northern portion of the park. The construction of the proposed trails will cut into the existing bank and filled with 6-12 inch gravel base. The running surface of the trail will be geogrid stabilized gravel or gravel filled concrete crib stairs on the steeper sections.

Compensatory mitigation for the trail construction and the removal of ten trees within the riparian area, consists of the planting an area of 160,000 square feet with native plants (including 236 new trees, 2,456 shrubs, and 5,500 plugs of Santa Barbara Sedge) and the removal of 64,000 square feet of invasive Large Periwinkle and Himalayan Blackberry. The terrace area, where the Large Periwinkle and Himalayan Blackberry are to be removed, will be re-vegetated with native trees, Basket Sedge, and Santa Barbara Sedge. Success criteria will be an 85% survival rate of the plantings over a 5 year period with annual reporting submitted to the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board. Noncompensatory mitigation for this project includes re-vegetation of disturbed areas, as appropriate, and the use of Best Management Practices for sediment and turbidity control, and for heavy equipment use near a waterway.

The applicant has applied to the United States Army Corps of Engineers for authorization to perform the project pursuant to Clean Water Act section 404. The applicant has applied to the California Department of Fish and Game for a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement. On October 13, 1999, the City of Ukiah approved a Mitigated Negative Declaration (State Clearinghouse No. 99092051) for the project in order to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act. The Regional Water Board has considered the environmental document and any proposed changes incorporated into the project or required as a condition of approval to avoid significant effects to the environment.

The information contained in this public notice is only a summary of the applicant's proposed activities. The application for Water Quality Certification in the Regional Water Board's file contains additional details about the proposed activities including maps and detailed design drawings. The application and Regional Water Board file are available for public review.

Regional Water Board staff are proposing to regulate this project pursuant to Section 401 of the Clean Water Act (33 USC 1341) and/or Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act authority. In addition, staff will consider all comments submitted in writing and received at this office by mail during a 21-day comment period that begins on the first date of issuance of this letter and ends at 5:00 p.m. on the last day of the comment period. If you have any questions, please contact staff member Stephen Bargsten at (707) 576-2653 within 21 days of the posting of this notice.